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Chapter 136: Reunion
THIS MANA...
I KNEW IT.
I'M SURE OF IT.
MY, MY...
THE GODDESS CAN BE SO CAPRICIOUS.
156
DID YOU FINISH ANALYZING THE POISON?
I'VE NEVER SEEN A REACTION LIKE THIS.
WE SHOULD TAKE HIM TO THE CHURCH...
IT'S TOO FAR AWAY.
GOING THROUGH ALL THOSE MAIN STREETS...
...WHILE THEY'RE HUNTING US WOULD BE SUICIDAL.
THE FACT THAT OUR ENEMIES ARE USING THE MAGIC OF THE GODDESS IS CONCERNING.
IT WOULD BE ONE THING IF IT WERE JUST A ROGUE PRIEST...
...BUT WE CAN'T RULE OUT THE POSSIBILITY THAT THEY'RE PRETENDING TO BE SOMEONE INVOLVED WITH THE CHURCH.
SO WHAT SHOULD WE DO?
...
AN ANTIDOTE.
THE PERSON WHO SHOT MASTER STARK SHOULD HAVE AN ANTIDOTE.
I'M NOT SO SURE.
ADVENTURING PARTIES THAT USE POISONS HAVE ANTIDOTES READY JUST IN CASE...
...OF POOR HANDLING OR ACCIDENTAL FRIENDLY FIRE.
THAT'S WHAT YOU TAUGHT ME, MISTRESS FRIEREN.
THAT'S RIGHT.
WHY DID YOU NOT SUGGEST IT?
I KNOW YOU MUST HAVE HAD THE SAME THOUGHT.
OF COURSE.
WE'RE IN THE MIDDLE OF A CITY...
...SO WE NEED TO LOOK FOR ANOTHER SOLUTION.
BECAUSE IF I'D MENTIONED IT...
...YOU'D HAVE LOST CONTROL OF YOURSELF.
159
I COULDN'T CARE LESS ABOUT THAT.
MASTER STARK'S LIFE IS AT STAKE.
FERN...
WE'RE IN THE IMPERIAL CAPITAL.
IT'S THE HEART OF HUMANITY'S LARGEST MAGIC-USING CIVILIZATION.
FOR THE SAKE OF OUR OWN SAFETY...
...I CAN'T ALLOW YOU TO GO TO WAR.
IF WE HARM CIVILIANS BY MISTAKE, WE RISK TURNING EVERYBODY AGAINST US.
THE IMPERIAL MAGES WHO ARE TRAINED IN COMBAT ARE SCARIER THAN YOU CAN IMAGINE.
NOW, TAKE A DEEP BREATH AND...
...LISTEN TO WHAT I—
MISTRESS FRIEREN...
DO YOU NOT HAVE FAITH IN MY SKILLS?
RIGHT NOW, I DON'T.
NOT IN THE STATE YOU'RE IN.
KACHK
DON'T SHOOT.
LONG TIME NO SEE...
...FRIEREN.
I NEVER EXPECTED WE'D RUN INTO EACH OTHER AGAIN, TO BE HONEST.
I DID SAY, "SEE YOU AGAIN," DIDN'T I?
I'D LIKE TO KNOW WHAT'S GOING ON, BUT...
...IT LOOKS LIKE THERE'S NO TIME FOR THAT.
LET ME TAKE A LOOK.
HE'S IN VERY BAD SHAPE.
DO YOU THINK YOU CAN HEAL HIM?
I DUNNO...
ONLY ONE WAY TO FIND OUT.
162
UM, WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE, MASTER SEIN?
WHAT'S GOING ON?
YOU DIDN'T NOTICE, DID YOU?
I SENSED SEIN'S MANA WHILE WE WERE RUNNING, SO I DECIDED TO RUN TOWARD HIM.
THEN I USED MY MANA TO LET HIM KNOW WE WERE HERE.
SINCE THEY'RE USING THE GODDESS'S MAGIC TO TRACK US DOWN...
...THERE WAS NO NEED TO CONCEAL OUR MANA.
AND SINCE THEY'RE NOT AFTER HIM, THERE'S NO WORRY ABOUT HIM GETTING SHOT.
THERE WASN'T ANY OTHER WAY TO SAFELY MEET UP.
OF COURSE, I NOTICED SEIN ONLY BY CHANCE...
...BUT A MAGE NEEDS TO STAY CALM ENOUGH TO BE ABLE TO MAKE USE OF ANY COINCIDENCE.
...
HE NEEDS TO REST FOR A WHILE.
THANK GOODNESS.
WHAT A PIECE OF LUCK.
IF IT WERE ANYONE BUT STARK, A SINGLE GRAZE WOULD HAVE KILLED THEM INSTANTLY.
THAT'S HOW DEADLY THAT POISON IS.
THANK YOU.
I DON'T KNOW WHAT WE'D HAVE DONE WITHOUT YOU.
THANK YOU VERY MUCH.
DON'T MENTION IT.
STILL, IT'S BEEN A WHILE, HASN'T IT?
WHAT BRINGS YOU TO THE IMPERIAL CAPITAL?
WELL, A LOT HAS HAPPENED.
THERE'S A CHANCE GORILLA'S HERE IN THIS CITY.
BUT THIS IS NO TIME FOR CHIT-CHAT.
WHAT'S THE SITUATION HERE?
THEY HAVEN'T MOVED FROM THE ABANDONED BUILDING.
CAN'T WE GET THEM TO FIGHT OUTSIDE SOMEHOW?
THEN I CAN TAKE A SHOT.
CAN YOU HEAR ME, GAZELLE?
PLEASE PROCEED TO THE ABANDONED BUILDING.
AYE.
I'M ALREADY ON MY WAY.
THAT BUILDING IS JUST BARELY WITHIN COMMUNICATION RANGE.
IF THEY DON'T FIGHT BACK...
...AND THEY FLEE...
DON'T CHASE THEM TOO FAR, HUH?
GOT IT.
I SEE. YOU HAVEN'T FIGURED OUT WHO YOU'RE UP AGAINST...
...BUT YOU KNOW THEY'VE CORNERED YOU BY TRACING YOUR MANA BACK TO YOU.
WHAT WORRIES ME IS THAT THEY SEEM TO WORK TOGETHER SO WELL.
WHAT DO YOU MEAN?
LET'S SAY I MANAGE TO EXPLOIT THE WEAKNESS...
...OF THIS MANA TRACE AND WORK OUT THE ENEMY PRIEST'S LOCATION.
BZZT
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UM, YOU WOULDN'T HAPPEN TO HAVE...
...A CITY MAP, WOULD YOU?
I DO, ACTUALLY.
HERE.
WHAT DO YOU HAVE THAT FOR?
THEY FORCED ME TO CARRY IT FOR THE MISSION...
Take this.
Please stop!
AS USUAL...
...TROUBLE SEEMS TO FIND YOU.
WELL THEN, I'LL TELL YOU...
...WHERE THE ENEMY IS.
I'M LISTENING.
THE QUESTION IS...
...WILL YOU BE ABLE TO AIM AT THAT SPOT...
...WITHOUT HESITATION?
YOU HAVE A POINT.
IT'D TAKE A LOT OF TRAINING TO ACHIEVE THIS.
I'M SURE THEY'RE ALSO TRYING TO AVOID CAUSING A DISTURBANCE IN THE MIDDLE OF THE CITY...
...SO THEY CAN'T AFFORD TO MISS.
RIGHT.
I SEE WHAT YOU'RE SAYING.
TO THEM, THE MAGIC OF THE GODDESS ISN'T JUST SOMETHING TO HELP IN A FIGHT.
IT'S THE BACKBONE OF THEIR STRATEGY.
WHAT DOES THAT MEAN—
THUD
KLANG
HEY NOW, YOU'RE SUPPOSED TO BE DEAD.
KABOOM
KANG
HA HA, THAT WAS CLOSE.
I DON'T THINK...
...I WANNA TAKE THIS KINDA RISK EVER AGAIN.
GREAT WORK, GAZELLE.
THIS WILL FLUSH THEM OUT.
WELL DONE, STARK.
THANK YOU FOR SAVING ME.
I TOLD YOU TO REST.
DON'T BE SO RECKLESS.
YOUR HEALING MAGIC REALLY IS IMPRESSIVE.
RECOVERY IS FAST, TOO.
HOW ARE YOU EVEN ABLE TO MOVE?
Terrifying...
YOU'RE TURNING INTO A REAL WARRIOR.
SEIN...
THE SPOT YOU POINTED AT EARLIER TO SHOW THE LOCATION OF THE ENEMY PRIEST—IT WASN'T RANDOM, WAS IT?
BINGO.
IT'S FOR REAL.
FERN...
THEY'RE ENTIRELY DEPENDENT ON THE GODDESS'S MAGIC. THAT'S THEIR WEAKNESS.
WE CAN PUT THEM OUT OF ACTION IF WE STRIKE THEIR CONTROL TOWER.
MISTRESS FRIEREN...
THERE'S NO TURNING BACK NOW.
AND EVEN AT THIS DISTANCE, I DON'T THINK YOU'RE GOING TO MISS.
GO AHEAD.
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